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**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/695,988

Examiner

Ali Imam

Applicant(s)

WENDELKEN ET AL.

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**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 11/28/5 (Amendment).
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 13-17, 19 and 20.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of the:
    1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
  5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
    - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
      - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

  
**ALI IMAM**  
 PRIMARY EXAMINER

### EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with the applicant, Martin E. Wendelken, on 02/06/2006.

The application has been amended as follows:

1) Claim 13 has been replaced with the following:

-- A standoff holder for an ultrasound transducer probe used in diagnostic ultrasound exams or therapeutic ultrasound treatment to insure coupling with a body comprising:

an elongated elastic sock for mounting over said ultrasound transducer probe including an acoustic window comprising a first open end and a second open end and an internal aperture extending therethrough, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the elastic sock conforms to the shape of the ultrasound transducer probe when mounted into said standoff holder, wherein,

said first open end includes an expansion collar including a plurality of spaced rigid strips mounted circumferentially about said ultrasound transducer probe including said acoustic window when said probe is mounted into said standoff holder. --;

2) In claim 14, line 1, "Claim 1" has been replaced with -- Claim 13 --;

3) In claim 15, line 1, "Claim 2" has been replaced with -- Claim 14 --;

4) In claim 16, line 1, "Claim 1" has been replaced with -- Claim 13 --;

5) In claim 17, line 1, "Claim 1" has been replaced with -- Claim 13 --;

6) Claim 18 has been canceled;

7) In claim 19, line 1, "Claim 1" has been replaced with -- Claim 13 --;

9) Claim 20 has been replaced with the following:

-- A standoff holder for an ultrasound transducer probe used in diagnostic ultrasound exams or therapeutic ultrasound treatment to insure coupling with a body comprising:

an elastic collar for mounting over the external surface of said ultrasound transducer probe comprising a first open end including a plurality of rigid strips and a second open end and an internal aperture extending therethrough to accommodate the shape of the ultrasound transducer probe including an acoustic window when mounted into said standoff holder, wherein,

said elastic collar mounted about said ultrasound transducer probe and extending outwardly from said acoustic window; and

a gel insert removably mounted and self-adjusting with said collar in engagement with said ultrasound transducer probe's acoustic window and extending outwardly therefrom. --.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: none of the prior art, alone or in combination teaches or suggests a standoff holder for an ultrasound probe comprising at least the limitations recited in claims 13 and 20, including an elongated elastic sock or collar for mounting over said ultrasound transducer probe including an acoustic window comprising a first open end including a plurality of rigid strips and a second open end and an internal aperture extending therethrough, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the elastic sock or collar conforms to the shape of the ultrasound transducer probe when mounted into said standoff holder. The closest reference to Kunii et al. (US 5,050,436) teaches a standoff holder for an ultrasound

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transducer probe including a sock or collar (see Fig. 5 items 200, 200A) but fails to mention specifically the claimed first open end including a plurality of rigid strips and a second open end and an internal aperture extending therethrough, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the elastic sock or collar conforms to the shape of the ultrasound transducer probe when mounted into said standoff holder.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

### ***Conclusion***

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ali Imam whose telephone number is 571-272-4737. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Th., 8:00- 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Casler can be reached on 571-272-4956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Ali Imam  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3737

AI  
2/6/6